

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the pending application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Status of the Application

Claims 1-52 are currently pending. No amendments are presented in this response.

Summary of the Office Action

The Office Action has entered a rejection based on a lack of unity of invention because the species claimed are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. The species identified in the Office Action are alleged to be based on differences in the functional group "Q".

Discussion

Applicants respectfully traverse the lack of unity rejection. While Applicants concede that more than one species is claimed, Applicants submit that the species are indeed linked in a manner that forms a single general inventive concept.

Each of the species (a polymer comprising a phenolic monomeric unit wherein the H atom of the hydroxyl group of the unit is replaced by a N-imide group Q) is linked by a single general inventive concept--a polymeric unit comprising a N-imide group Q having a particular structure (as recited in claim 1). Given the specificity of the unit described in independent claim 1 and 12, and noting that the Office Action fails to assert that a single search would be insufficient to obtain all art relevant to the claims, there is no reasonable basis for entry of the lack of unity rejection.

The Office Action argues (p. 9) that the group Q in each species has a different terminal/capping unit, and the compounds for positive- and negative-working plates are different. However, there is no assertion that the differences in terminal capping units, or the use of the units in positive- or -negative-working plates has any impact on the examiner's search. Indeed, because the species are structurally related to one another (as detailed above), and thus are so linked as to form a single general inventive concept, Applicants submit that the burden on the examiner in searching for all species is not excessive, and could be

undertaken without undue effort. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

If the examiner is not inclined to withdraw the rejection, Applicants provisionally elect the species Cp. Claims 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 26, 29, 35 and 38 are generic.

Conclusion

As Applicants believe the application is in proper condition for allowance, the examiner is respectfully requested to pass the application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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